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STATE FOR R/MR, I/PP, WHA/BSC, WHA/PDA, WHA/EPSC

STATE FOR INR/IAA, PM, INL

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [KMDR](#) [KPAO](#) [OPRC](#) [CI](#)

SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION - PRESIDENT BUSH'S TRAVEL TO LATIN AMERICA

[¶1.](#) On March 16, conservative, influential newspaper-of-record "El Mercurio" (circ. 129,000) ran a positive editorial about President Bush's trip to Latin America entitled "The Other America." Quote:

[¶2.](#) "Bush reached an understanding with governments both on the left and right and was well received by most. Chavez' parallel tour...was wisely ignored. Politically the U.S. is right for being...concerned about regaining influence in a region in which it will continue to be linked for several reasons: Chavez' offensive, China's growing influence, greater participation of the European Community.

[¶3.](#) In sum, the trip was a first step of a long-awaited return, which resulted in nothing outstanding, but was tangible -- a positive U.S. diplomatic initiative with acceptable results."

KELLY